4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 56a] Sierra

picked up by trucks from turpentine distilleries in Uruapan and Morelia. Charcoal is a minor commercial forest product made by Tarascans living near mestizo towns. The latter comprise the principal markets for charcoal, which has never entered Tarascan culture.[129] Other minor forest products consist of *ocote* splinters, used for primitive interior illumination;[130] softwoods (madroño, jaboncillo, aile, etc.) for lathe work; pine and fir for cabinet work; etc.

Within the last 50 years the commercial sawmill has penetrated into the Sierra. Lumber companies purchase cutting rights of standing timber from the pueblos and set up a steam- or (when near a power line) electric-powered saw in the midst of the forest.[131] When the suitable timber has been depleted (under Federal inspection), the mill closes down, and the remnant of the forest reverts to the pueblo. Although most companies bring in mestizo labor, many Tarascans from villages nearby obtain seasonal work in the sawmills, thereby supplementing their usually low income. Because of their ephemeral character, the number of mills in the area varies. In 1940 there were five mills in the Sierra proper; in 1946 the number had decreased to three.

During the last 100 years cutting has exceeded natural timber growth in the Sierra. Clearing of new plowland to sustain increased population and commercial lumbering have been the major factors of forest depletion. Moreover, disease has recently destroyed acres of pine in the vicinity of Tarecuato, and volcanic ash has laid waste the forest within a 3-mile radius of Paricutin. Lumbering even by the Tarascan woodsmen is often wasteful. Large trees are sometimes cut and left unattended for years until rot renders the wood useless.[132] Improper tapping for resin and testing for shakes often kill many trees. The sawmills, operating on a much larger scale than the native lumbermen, are even more destructive, and in former years they depleted large sections of Sierra forest. Approximately 50 years ago the timberland in the eastern part of the Sierra east

[129] The main charcoal-producing town in the area are San Lorenzo (Uruapan market), Opopeo and Cuanajo (Pátzcuaro market).

[130] The *rancheros* around Pamatácuaro gather much ocote, which the women market in the large mestizo towns bordering the Sierra.

[131] In 1944 the pueblo of San Felipe sold its forest to an Uruapan company for two million pesos. The proceeds were deposited in an Uruapan bank, where they remain communal property.

[132] Such wasteful exploitation was much in evidence in the forest lands of Pamatácuaro on the southern slope of Cerro de Patamban.